

## Literary Term: Foreshadowing

**Foreshadowing** is the technique authors use to hint at something that will happen or something we will learn later on in the book. There are two main reasons to use foreshadowing. The first is to build suspense. The second is to prepare readers for what will happen—either good or bad—and to make the story more believable.

Sometimes, especially in mysteries, an author includes misleading clues. These misleading clues are known as *red herrings* and are meant for you to think something different from what is going to happen. The hints may be found in dialogue or in narration.

### Example

An orphan learns his true identity and claims his inheritance in Charles' Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. Many hints along the way foreshadow this outcome. For example, when Oliver sees a photograph of a woman who he later learns is his deceased mother, he gets the feeling the picture wants to speak to him. And when Oliver's grandfather meets Oliver for the first time, the old man recognizes several familiar features.

### What might that mean?

Write the letter of the right ending being foreshadowed in each question.

- a. One or more children will later be lost.
- b. A dog will tree a mountain lion and then be attacked by it.
- c. The boy's father will die.
- d. One of the characters present will be killed in the way for independence.
- e. The ship will be attacked.

\_\_\_ 1. From *A Day No Pigs Would Die*, by Robert Newton Peck (Chapter 7)  
"The sky's a good place to look, he [Papa] said. 'And I got a notion it's a good place to go.'"

\_\_\_ 2. From *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by Ronald Dahl (Chapter 14)  
"I shouldn't like to lose any of you at *this* stage of the proceedings!"

\_\_\_ 3. From *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Wilson Rawls (Chapter VI)  
"They'll never bother you unless they [mountain lions] are wounded or cornered, but if they are, you had better look out."

\_\_\_ 4. From *The Cay*, by Theodore Taylor (Chapter Two)  
"Well, you can rest easy, Phillip. The Germans would never waste a torpedo on this old tub." Yet I saw him looking over the lifeboats. Then he inspected the fire hoses on the boat deck. I knew he was worried."

\_5. From *Johnny Tremain*, by Esther Forbes (Chapter 5) "Each shall give according to his own abilities, and some—" he turned to Rab—"some will give their lives."

## The Fairy Tale Way

Fairy tales often use blatant hints and repetition to build suspense and foreshadow future events. Answer the following.

1. What changes in the attitude and actions of the title characters of Beauty and the Beast foreshow that they will fall in love?
2. What clues should Little Red Riding Hood have recognized to realize that her grandmother was not really her grandmother?
3. How does the reader know that Goldilocks is going to be discovered by the bear family in "The 3 Little Bears"?
4. Recall the story of "The 3 Little Pigs." How does the reader know the wolf is going to arrive at the brick house after visiting the house of twigs? Why is the reader not surprised that the wolf cannot blow down the house of bricks like he did the houses made of straw and sticks?
5. Why is the reader not surprised when a carriage turns into a pumpkin and a dress into rags in "Cinderella"?